

II. Remarks

Claims 1-11 were pending in this application and have been rejected. The present amendment cancels claims 2 and 6, and amends claims 1 and 5 to more particularly point out and clarify Applicants' invention. No new matter has been added by the present amendment.

Reconsideration of the Application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0253710, issued to Gray et al. ("Gray"). Claims 2 and 6 have been cancelled and therefore, the rejections of claims 2 and 6 are now moot. In view of the amendments and remarks contained herein, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of claims 1, 3-5 and 7-11 are traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the perforated section has one or more perforations formed completely through a part of the main housing structure that extends away from the housing cover adjacent to the inner side and which is covered by the housing cover when installed in the motor vehicle so as to not be visible to the vehicle occupants. Support for this amendment may be found in Applicants' application at paragraph [0033]-[0034].

Gray discloses an airbag door system 2 for an instrument trim panel comprising a substrate 8, an outer shell 11 and a foam 6 where all three layers possess a line of mechanical weakness with each line of mechanical weakness

at least partially separating each layer into an airbag door portion 10 and a trim portion 20. Gray at Abstract. In particular, all three layers possess upper and lowers surfaces. The upper surface 12 of the outer shell 11 (suggested analogous "outer side of the housing cover" by the Examiner – Office Action at page 2) is viewed by a vehicle occupant. Opposite the outer shell 11 of the airbag door 10 is the airbag door and trim member substrates 17, 27 (suggested analogous "inner side of the housing cover" by the Examiner – Office Action at page 3). The lower surface 29 of the airbag door and trim member substrate 17, 27 is adjacent the airbag canister housing 34 (suggested analogous "main housing structure" by the Examiner – Office Action at page 3). The substrate 8 is separated by substrate apertures 36 (suggested analogous "perforated section" by the Examiner – Office Action at page 3) into the airbag door substrate 17 and the trim member substrate 27. *Id.* at paragraphs [0091]-[0092] and Figures 2-3. Notably, the substrate apertures 36 are not formed in the airbag canister housing 34.

This is unlike Applicants' invention. More specifically, the substrate apertures 36 extend through only the substrate 8 to form the airbag door substrate 17 and trim member substrate 27. As suggested by the Examiner, the substrate 17 is analogous to Applicants' claimed inner side of the housing cover. Accordingly, the apertures 36 disclosed by Gray would suggest being analogously formed through only the inner side of the housing cover of Applicants' invention and not through the main housing structure. This is not Applicants' invention as recited in claim 1 where the perforated section has one or more perforations formed completely through a part of the main housing structure that extends away from the housing cover adjacent to the inner side.

The rejection under section 103(a) is therefore improper and should be withdrawn. Accordingly, Applicants believe that claims 1, 3-5 and 7-11 are in a condition for allowance.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present form of the claims are patentably distinguishable over the art of record and that this application is now in condition for allowance. Such action is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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